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ABSTRACT

In May of 1977, each public school district and regional superintendent in the 31 southernmost counties of Illinois (principally rural, small schools) was sent a number of the Needs Assessment Instruments. The 295 returned instruments included responses from the following elementary and secondary personnel: teachers (N=86); principals (N=85); guidance counselors (N=40); superintendents (N=70); and other specialists (N=14). The Instrument provided data regarding: respondents' county; years of experience; school district type (elementary, high school, or unit district); total school enrollment (below 250 to above 2,000); administrative needs; curriculum needs; instructional needs; and pupil personnel services and adult education needs. Major findings indicated: the five most significant needs were increasing pupil motivation, developing favorable pupil attitudes toward learning, maintaining effective school/community relations, improving articulation and continuity in curriculum organization, and understanding evolving state legislation related to schools; as a group, the administrative needs were the most pressing; and only in the area of job classification was there respondent disagreement among problem areas (district size, type of district, or years of experience having had no significant bearing on respondent responses). (JC)

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Center for Rural Education
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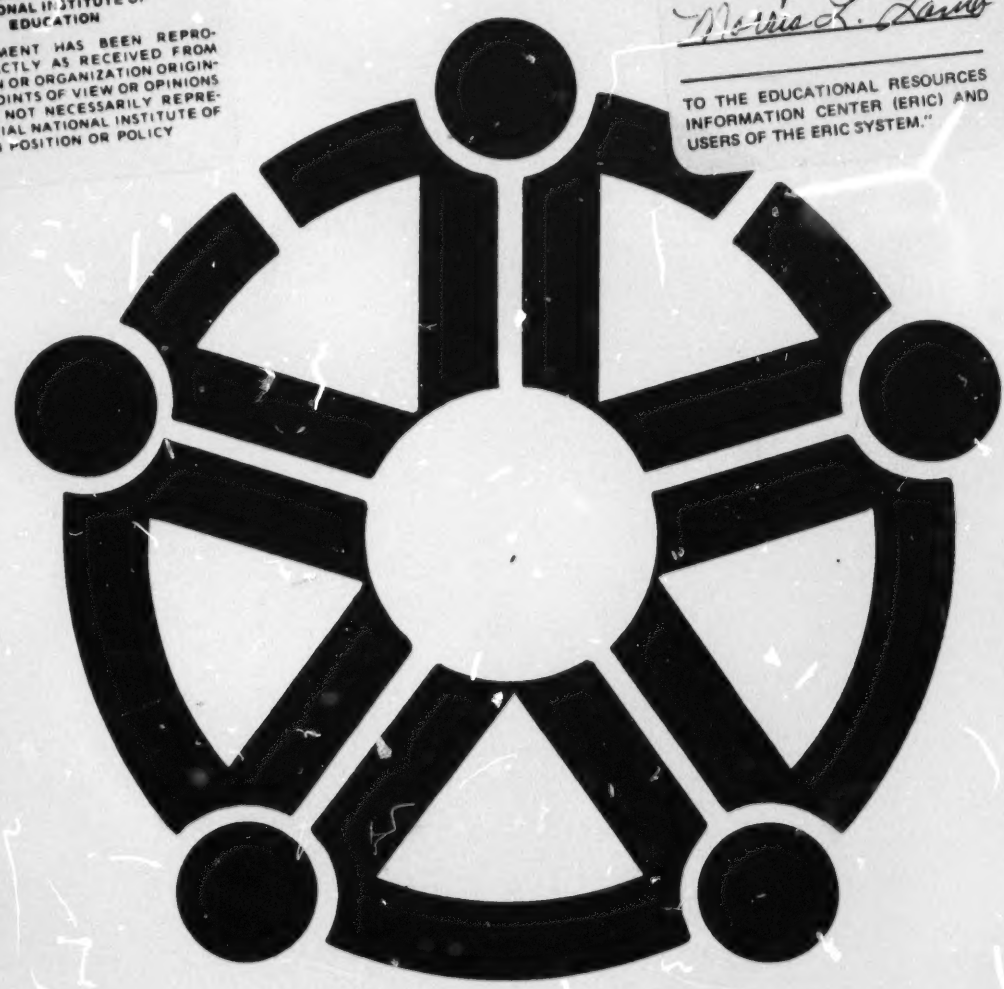
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Center for Rural Education
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A Needs Assessment of the Public Schools in the Thirty-one Southernmost Counties in Illinois

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of elementary and secondary school organization and development in the southernmost counties of the State of Illinois, there has existed a pattern of service and assistance extended to local school boards, administrators, and teachers, by various state and local organizations and agencies. The Center for Rural Education in the College of Education at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is committed to the joint and continuing development of service, teaching, and research activities with the schools of southern Illinois.

In Spring, 1977, administrators, teachers, counselors, and others in southern Illinois were contacted by mail for the purpose of requesting their responses to an assessment instrument dealing with administrative, curricular, instructional, and pupil personnel services and

adult education needs. This monograph includes a summary and interpretation of the responses received.

The purpose of this monograph is to provide baseline data on which proposals for relevant school services and research projects may be based. Such projects are consistent with the goals of the Center for Rural Education in the College of Education at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Funding for the needs assessment and for this monograph was provided by the State of Illinois, Illinois Office of Education sponsored Teacher/Administrator Service Project. Questions concerning the Project or the Center for Rural Education may be directed to John R. Evans, Associate Dean, College of Education, 11 Wham Building, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois 62901.

CHAPTER I

CONCEPTS OF RURALNESS

The roots of America's past is steeped in the developmental state of ruralness. Muse (1977) reports that the census records of the first fifty years of the country under a constitution showed approximately 19 out of every 20 families living in a rural setting. This concept of ruralness gave way to the encroachment of industrialization; this coupled with other social conditions caused the beginning of a migration to the cities that has slowed only in the decade of the seventies.

In the earlier half of this century on Friday evenings after work and on work free weekends one could observe the rural person vacating his rural habitat to gain acculturation and recreational experiences in an urban environment. The need to procure weekly supplies and escape the isolation of the country motivated the rural person to seek solace in a more populated area.

As the United States moved into the depression era during the decade of the thirties rural America became like an illegitimate child, everyone knew it existed and had many problems but few people were openly talking about it and working to solve the complex problems which were a part of it. Authors such as Steinbeck painted such depressing written pictures of rural life it left a negative taste in society's mouth as well as negatively labeling the rural person. To a number of Americans living at the end of the thirties the term rural had become a fighting word.

Now as the United States moves into the last quarter of this century we see the urban areas infested with a number of problems from which people want to escape. The problems manifest themselves in an array of difficulties ranging from pollution of air, water and land to increasing crime and a multitude of problems associated with the family, (e.g. divorce, breakdown of the extended and nuclear family, drugs, youth gangs, etc.). This coupled with the normal people pollution problems of noise, energy needs, clean water and air has caused the city, which had attracted people a half century before, to expell its residents on Friday to the more pastoral (and hopefully more isolated from the city's problems) rural setting.

An evolving concept gaining rapid approval seems to be, "It is from ruralness we have come and it is to rural areas we may wish to return." Support for this idea is seen in the increased interest of urban people seeking rural recreational experiences. The urban population laden with campers, boats, skis, hiking equipment, hunting equipment, fishing equipment and a myriad of other recreational paraphernalia produced to be used in rural areas leaves the city seeking the less polluted environment of rural America. This concept is also exemplified through the building of temporary housing (summer homes in the mountains or by the sea, etc.) or permanent homes in rural or seeming rural areas. Being able to find solitude in a mass of people is becoming a luxury of the very rich.

This concept has also been manifested in the move of industry to construct new plants in less populated areas.

Some factors creating motivation for this is a more accessible work force, (usually less organized) lower taxes, lower land prices and more available space for expansion and development.

Tamblyn (1973) suggests that one of the most difficult tasks encountered in discussing "Rural" is that of definition. What an acceptable definition of rural may be will vary from person to person. But whatever that definition may be, it is evident that the slumber giant of ruralness is beginning to awaken. A vast array of different segments of the society are beginning to try to understand and improve rural America. The task has only begun!

CHAPTER II

RURAL EDUCATION: A CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

Today the educator is beginning to understand and appreciate the concept of ruralness. He is beginning to seriously research education from a rural point of view. The major focus for educational research over the past few decades has been in the urban setting. Moe and Tamblyn (1974) state that not only is there increasing interest in rural development, but there are some basic concerns about rural education which persist as conditions have changed. Moe and Tamblyn quote Dawson who points out (Page 32):

If the propositions are accepted that people learn in terms of their past experiences and from environmental influences, and that rural children and youth have unique experiences and environmental influences, it must be granted that the education of rural children and youth presents unique and identifiable problems.

Muse (1977) states that in 1972 there were 16,511 operating public school districts in the United States. Of this number, 7,103 districts had fewer than 600 students in their attendance boundaries. Moe and Tamblyn (1974) identify non-metropolitan areas or the new rural as was defined in the 1970 Census as people and places outside of counties containing a city of 50,000 or more inhabitants. When this is done 63.8 million people of the United States by residence would be portrayed as rural non-metropolitan. With this percentage of our population living in rural areas the educational researcher has begun to balance his research efforts by redirecting his attention from only the urban educational setting and he has included the rural setting as a significant research base.

Recent publications related to rural education have indicated that there are many areas in which development is occurring. In 1974 the North Central Association issued a publication entitled *The Small School: Returning to the Human Dimension*. The publication identified a list of 24 strengths and 18 limitations of problems associated with small schools. The report also

identified 8 general considerations for improving small schools. Included in the publication was an annotated survey of the literature on small schools written by Everett D. Edington and John H. Hazel.

In 1975 the National Institute of Education funded a project which produced a 292 page publication entitled, *Rural Education: A Selected Bibliography*. This publication (with ERIC abstracts) has order forms printed in it as a part of the book. It is a comprehensive, up-to-date listing of rural education information and research.

In 1976 Everett D. Edington's publication *Strengthening the Small Rural School* identified 5 strengths and 5 weaknesses of the small rural school.

The 5 major strengths were:

1. An homogeneous sociocultural background
2. The potential for close-knit educational organization
3. Close student/teacher relationships
4. Community involvement
5. A classroom environment conducive to innovative techniques.

The 5 major weaknesses were:

1. Poor organizational structures
2. Difficulties in the recruitment and retention of quality personnel
3. Inadequate facilities
4. Curriculum deficiencies
5. Inadequate financial support.

Among a number of studies related to rural education none has probably created more interest related to certain findings than the 1976 National Institute of Education contract written by Sher and Thompkins. They point out in the report that there is no strong evidence that consolidation is necessarily beneficial to the taxpayer, the administrator, or to the student. Also, according to Sher and Thompkins there is no evidence that student achievement is higher in larger schools or that attending a larger school increases a student's chances for success in college. This report is beneficial reading for anyone interested in rural education.

In 1977 Muse published a book entitled *Preservice Programs for Educational Personnel Going into Rural Schools*. In the book he outlines the desirability of specialized training for educators of rural schools. He identifies colleges and universities which offer pre-service and in-service programs for rural educators. His recent publication is the most authoritative, up-to-date publication concerning this area of development in rural education.

A number of institutions and/or organizations have been instrumental in the development of rural education. Among those are the Cooperative Rural Career Guidance Center at the Ohio State University. They have produced a wealth of printed material and have worked extensively in the public schools.

After having dissolved its Department of Rural Education in an earlier decade the College of Education at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale has more recently become (re)involved in the educational needs of rural schools. In 1975 it offered a mini-conference on "The Problems and Prospects in Rural and Small Schools." In 1976 the College of Education developed the "First Annual Southern Regional Conference on

Rural Education." In 1977 the College of Education formalized the development of the Center for Rural Education. At present the College of Education has a working Rural Education Committee and is involved in numerous short term and long term projects related to rural education.

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon has been involved in the development of educational programs related to rural education. School districts in a number of northwestern states have worked cooperatively with the Lab to improve education in their rural schools.

The Rural/Regional Education Association continues to be an active, important force in the development of rural education. Its bimonthly publication *Rural/Regional Education News* published at the Chautauqua County Board of Cooperative Educational Services, 9520 Fredonia-Stockton Road, Fredonia, NY 14063, keeps readers informed of evolving issues and events in rural education. The publication also is a major forum for the discussion of issues related to rural education.

No discussion of efforts in rural education would be complete without mentioning the Educational Resources Information Center/Clearinghouse for Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS). This important agency is housed at New Mexico State University at Las Cruces. It is the distribution center for a wealth of information concerning rural and small schools. They have now extended their scope to include Mexican American, American Indian, migrant and outdoor education.

To mention the efforts of all people involved in the development of rural education would be a voluminous task too extensive for this report. To close though it seems appropriate to cite a quote from the North Central Association's (1974) Committee on Small Schools:

...the NCA Committee on Small Schools is more assured than ever that the small school not only has a variable future, but that with thoughtful design and planning it well can become the keystone for the new configuration of schools emerging in contemporary America. The small social institution, be it a school or a governmental agency or a church or whatever, represents one of the few ways by which our long-cherished national dream and aspirations for genuine democracy can survive in a world of out-sized numbers.

CHAPTER III

REPORT OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT DATA

In May, 1977, each public school district and regional superintendent in the 31 southernmost counties of Illinois were sent a number of the Needs Assessment Instruments. It was requested that each superintendent fill out a Needs Assessment Instrument and ask a principal, teacher and guidance counselor at all levels in his district to fill out an instrument. Also, each regional superintendent of the 31 counties was sent a

Needs Assessment Instrument to be filled out. There were 296 instruments returned. Of this number one instrument was voided, leaving the total population responding as 295.

The Needs Assessment Instrument asked respondents to identify their current positions. Table 1 identifies the number of respondents for each category.

TABLE 1
OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS

Occupation	Number	Percentage of Total
Teachers	86	29%
Principals	85	29%
Guidance Counselors	40	14%
Superintendents	70	24%
Others*	14	4%
Total	295	100%

*Includes curriculum specialists, media specialists, librarians, etc.

Of the teachers, 39 were elementary teachers, 14 were junior high/middle school teachers and 33 were high school teachers. Of the principals, 35 were elementary principals, 10 were junior high/middle school principals and 40 were high school principals.

Each respondent to the Needs Assessment Instrument was asked to identify the county in which they taught. Table 2 identifies the counties which are in the educational service regions, and also gives the numbers and percentages of respondents from each educational service region and county.

TABLE 2
COUNTIES IN WHICH RESPONDENTS TAUGHT

<i>Counties arranged into Educational Service Regions</i>	Number	Percentage of Total
Alexander/Pulaski	12	4%
Bond/Fayette	22	7%
Clay/Jasper/Richland	11	4%
Clinton/Washington	21	7%
Crawford	5	2%
Edwards/Wabash	14	5%
Effingham	6	2%
Gallatin/Hardin/Pope/Saline	19	6%
Hamilton/Jefferson	21	7%
Jackson	23	8%
Johnson/Massac	22	7%
Lawrence	8	3%
Marion	11	4%
Perry	8	3%
Randolph	15	5%
Union	14	5%
Wayne	14	5%
White	9	3%
Williamson	21	7%
Franklin	12	4%
Blank	7	3%

The largest number of respondents from any county or educational service was 23; this constitutes 7.8 per-

cent of the total number of respondents. The fewest number of respondents from any county or educational service region is 5; this constitutes 1.7 percent of the total number of respondents.

Respondents were asked to identify the number of years they had taught. Table 3 indicates the number of respondents in each category and the percentage represents.

TABLE 3
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Year Range	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total
0- 3	12	4%
4- 6	36	12%
7- 9	45	15%
10-15	65	22%
More than 15	130	44%
Blank	7	3%
Total	295	100%

A great number of respondents had 10 or more years of experience. The largest number of respondents had more than 15 years of experience.

Respondents were asked to identify the type of school district in which they taught. Table 4 indicates the district type, number of respondents in each district and the district percentage represented by the number.

TABLE 4
TYPE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Type	Number of Respondents in This District	Percentage of Total
Elementary (K-8)	79	27%
High School (9-12)	40	14%
Unit District (K-12)	173	59%
Blank	3	0%
Total	295	100%

Unit districts made up the greatest number of respondents. Elementary districts were next in number of respondents and the high school districts had the fewest number of respondents.

Each respondent was asked to identify the total number of students enrolled in the district in which he/she taught. Table 5 identifies the district size and the number of respondents in each category.

TABLE 5
TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Enrollment	Number of Respondents in This District Size	Percentage of Total
0- 250	82	28%
251- 500	56	19%
501- 750	62	21%
751-1000	28	9%
1001-1500	30	10%
1501-2000	15	5%
Over 2000	15	5%

Blank	7	2%
Total	295	100%

Most respondents were from school districts which had small enrollments. The district size with the greatest number of respondents was the 0-250 district. The district with the second greatest number of respondents was 501-750. The district with the third greatest number of respondents being in the 251-500 district. Two hundred respondents of the 295 were from districts with less than 751 students enrolled. This is 68 percent of the total number of respondents.

The Needs Assessment Instrument asked respondents to indicate what the major needs were in their districts. The needs areas were divided into 4 categories. The first category was identified as "Administrative Needs." There were 16 types of administrative needs classified in this area. Each respondent was asked to check

whether a need was a "strong need" (immediate attention desirable), "moderate need" (attention appropriate within one to three months), "low need" (attention appropriate within the school year), or "not a problem" (no attention needed).

The needs have been rank ordered from 1 through 16 by combining the percentages in the first two columns. The combined percentages have been listed in the first column in parenthesis. See Table 6 for the percentages and rank ordering of the Administrative Needs.

The major administrative need identified was maintaining effective school/community relations. The second major administrative need was understanding evolving state legislation related to school. The third major administrative need was keeping aware of the law cases affecting schools. The two administrative needs receiving the lowest ranking was obtaining legal advice when needed and food service.

TABLE 6

ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

<i>Order of Administrative Need</i>	<i>Combined Total of 1 and 2</i>	<i>1 Strong Need</i>	<i>2 Moderate Need</i>	<i>3 Low Need</i>	<i>4 Not a Problem</i>
Maintaining effective school/community relations	(73.6)	37.5	36.1	17.7	8.7
Understanding evolving state legislation related to schools	(67.4)	27.3	40.1	20.1	12.5
Keeping aware of law cases affecting school (e.g., student rights, teacher rights)	(65.4)	26.3	39.1	23.2	11.4
Evaluation of teaching performance	(60.7)	25.3	35.4	23.9	15.4
Developing effective communication processes among the administration and staff	(58.8)	22.8	36.0	25.6	15.6
Understanding and operationalizing state budget guidelines	(57.0)	20.6	36.4	30.8	12.2
Solving transportation needs and cost related problems	(56.7)	26.6	30.1	23.4	19.6
Obtaining adequate pupil personal services to meet state mandated requirements or district needs	(53.6)	18.8	34.8	26.5	19.9
Understanding how to work with teacher unions constructively	(52.2)	24.5	27.7	25.9	22.0
Maintaining effective workshop relationship with school boards	(52.2)	18.2	34.0	24.6	23.2
Obtaining sufficient amounts of instructional materials for the school	(45.8)	13.6	32.2	30.1	24.1
Obtaining Capital Development Board help in upgrading the school's physical plant	(43.7)	23.6	20.1	25.0	31.3
Working with and/or utilizing community agencies	(41.3)	8.4	32.9	40.6	18.2
Administrative staff development	(36.4)	8.1	28.3	36.0	27.6
Obtaining legal advice when needed	(30.9)	7.7	23.2	34.5	34.5
Food service: personnel or providing an adequate lunch	(25.6)	7.0	18.6	27.0	47.4

The next category of needs identified on the Needs Assessment Instrument was Curriculum Needs. The respondents checked the appropriate column to indicate the importance of the need. Table 7 shows the percentages and rank ordering. There are 18 Curriculum Needs Identified.

TABLE 7

CURRICULUM NEEDS

<i>Order of Curricular Need</i>	<i>Combined Total of 1 and 2</i>	<i>1 Strong Need</i>	<i>2 Moderate Need</i>	<i>3 Low Need</i>	<i>4 Not a Problem</i>
Improving articulation and continuity in curriculum organization K-12	(68.1)	30.9	37.2	20.8	11.1
Making curriculum offerings relevant to present and future needs of pupils	(63.5)	21.3	42.2	23.7	12.9
Keeping aware of and understanding educational research related to curriculum development	(58.9)	12.2	46.7	30.3	10.8
Assessing curriculum needs of the district for the purpose of developing curriculum offerings	(57.8)	21.5	36.3	31.1	11.1
Curriculum evaluation at the local and system level	(55.0)	19.5	35.5	32.8	12.2
Understanding how to develop new curriculum programs and put them into operation	(54.0)	16.4	37.6	32.1	13.9
Using the community as a curriculum resource	(49.8)	10.4	39.4	33.6	16.6
Developing short- and long-range curriculum goals	(49.2)	17.1	32.1	38.3	12.5
Community participation in curriculum evaluation and development	(48.1)	12.5	35.6	36.0	15.9
Understanding and writing curriculum aims, goals, instructional objectives and student objectives	(47.9)	15.6	32.3	31.6	20.5
Developing curriculum products, learning packets, resource units and lesson plans	(47.9)	13.3	34.6	35.0	17.1
Expanding curriculum offerings for pupils	(47.7)	13.4	34.3	34.3	18.0
Increasing curriculum production and dissemination	(47.5)	11.7	35.8	36.2	16.3
Preparing school boards for curricular changes	(47.1)	15.7	31.4	34.5	18.5
Developing mini-course offerings	(42.1)	14.0	28.1	38.6	19.3
Developing curriculum offerings to meet IOE mandated programs	(39.2)	9.2	30.0	37.1	23.7
Developing desirable early childhood programs	(35.8)	11.0	24.8	31.6	32.6
Help with textbook selection	(28.3)	5.9	22.4	40.9	30.8

The major Curriculum Need identified was improving articulation and continuity in curriculum organization. The second most important Curriculum Need was making curriculum offerings relevant to present and future needs of pupils. The third most important Curriculum Need was keeping aware of and understanding educational research related to curriculum development. The least pressing Curriculum Needs were developing desirable early childhood programs and developing curriculum offerings to meet Illinois Office of Education mandated programs.

The next category of needs was identified as Instructional Needs. The respondents classified the needs and the needs have been rank ordered and are exhibited in Table 8.

The most important Instructional Need was increasing pupil motivation. The second most important Instructional Need was to develop in pupils a favorable attitude toward learning. The third most important Instructional Need was upgrading instructional skills of all faculty. The least important Instructional Needs were writing behavioral objectives and developing team teaching approaches to instruction. There were 21 needs identified as Instructional Needs.

TABLE 8

INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS

<i>Order of Instructional Needs</i>	<i>Combined Total of 1 and 2</i>	<i>1 Strong Need</i>	<i>2 Moderate Need</i>	<i>3 Low Need</i>	<i>4 Not a Problem</i>
Increasing pupil motivation	(81.6)	42.9	38.7	15.0	3.5
Develop in pupils a favorable attitude toward learning	(78.1)	44.8	33.3	16.7	5.2
Upgrading instructional skills of all faculty	(62.3)	23.8	38.5	29.4	8.4
Keeping abreast of new instructional developments	(61.4)	16.8	44.6	32.3	6.3
Appropriately using classroom visitation for improving instruction	(59.2)	18.0	41.2	27.5	13.4
Develop a desirable evaluation program for assessing the pupil's progress		19.9	38.0	28.2	13.9
Develop an instructional program related to mastery learning or individualized instruction	(56.5)	14.7	41.8	34.4	9.1
Managing misbehavior of pupils	(55.5)	20.8	34.7	32.3	12.2
Matching student's learning styles with appropriate teaching styles	(53.5)	15.7	37.8	33.2	13.3
Developing a classroom climate conducive to learning	(53.1)	17.8	35.3	30.1	16.8
Improving in-service programs for staff development related to rural education	(52.6)	19.4	33.2	26.5	20.8
Utilizing media constructively in classrooms	(52.2)	12.8	39.4	35.1	12.4
Understanding the appropriate use of the standardized tests	(48.1)	13.0	35.1	32.6	19.3
Developing a desirable reporting program to parents	(47.7)	16.6	31.1	38.2	14.1
Helping beginning teachers understand rural students' special needs	(46.1)	15.5	30.6	32.4	21.5
Developing appropriate classroom activities	(46.0)	10.8	35.2	34.8	19.2
Developing appropriate preassessment or diagnostic instruments	(45.8)	12.9	32.9	37.8	16.4
Using the community as a resource	(44.8)	10.4	34.4	35.1	20.1
Flexible scheduling and programming	(44.7)	12.8	31.9	28.5	26.7
Developing team teaching approach to instruction	(36.7)	10.1	26.6	38.8	24.5

The fourth and last category of needs was identified as Pupil Personal Services and Adult Education Needs. There were 15 categories in this area. See Table 9 for the rank ordering of needs and the percentages of respondents in each area.

The three most important needs under this category were all related to pupil personal services. The first most important need was improving the counseling of students. The second most important need was improving consulting with staff concerning guidance. The third most important need was educational and occupational planning with pupils.

The least important needs were related to adult education need. The least important needs were GED preparation and community use of school physical plant.

TABLE 9

PUPIL PERSONAL SERVICES AND ADULT EDUCATION NEEDS

Order of Pupil Personal Services and Adult Education Needs	Combined Total of 1 and 2	1 Strong Need	2 Moderate Need	3 Low Need	4 Not a Problem
Improving the counseling of students	(60.3)	23.4	36.9	24.8	14.9
Improving consulting with staff concerning guidance	(58.2)	20.6	37.6	25.9	16.0
Educational and occupational planning with pupils	(57.4)	18.3	39.1	26.1	13.2
Assessing pupil performance	(56.4)	14.2	42.2	29.8	13.8
Communications of guidance services to students, staff and community	(55.8)	18.7	37.1	27.6	16.6
Developing an adequate guidance program	(48.0)	18.0	30.0	29.0	23.0
Obtaining local information on student oriented programs	(38.7)	9.3	29.4	39.4	21.3
Increase working relationships with area businesses in adult education programs	(32.9)	6.7	26.2	33.3	33.7
Coordination of resources for working with the elderly	(31.9)	5.6	26.3	36.1	31.9
Development of community/regional social services	(31.8)	6.1	25.7	40.7	27.5
Develop adult basic education programs	(29.8)	9.2	20.6	31.2	39.0
Obtaining funding for adult basic education and GED programs	(29.4)	11.7	17.7	30.1	40.4
Cooperation from civic groups in adult education programs	(27.8)	6.3	21.5	35.2	37.0
Community use of school physical plant	(26.4)	5.3	21.1	33.5	40.1
GED preparation	(23.0)	6.0	17.0	31.1	45.9

CHAPTER IV

MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Major Findings. The 5 most significant needs and 5 least significant needs from all 4 categories are identified below.

The Five Most Significant Needs:

1. Increasing pupil motivation
2. Develop in pupils a favorable attitude toward learning
3. Maintaining effective school/community relations
4. Improving articulation and continuity in curriculum organization

riculum organization

5. Understanding evolving state legislation related to schools.

The Five Least Significant Needs:

1. GED preparation
2. Food Service: personnel or providing an adequate lunch
3. Community use of the physical plant
4. Cooperation from civic groups in adult education programs
5. Help with textbook selection

As a group administrative needs were the most pressing area identified. Instructional needs were also identified.

fied as a major concern. Curriculum needs and guidance were of moderate to strong concern to a majority of the respondents. Adult education was a low need area.

In the examination of data it was found that only in the area of job classification was there a disagreement among problem areas. District size, type of district, or years of experience did not have a significant bearing on how respondents identified the major needs.

Conclusions. It is concluded that educators in the 31 southernmost counties in Illinois feel that a number of needs in their schools warrant immediate attention or warrant attention in one to three months. Of the seventy needs identified, thirty-one were identified in this manner. Educators are concerned but may not be aware of solutions or they may not have the necessary resources (economically or otherwise) to provide for an acceptable solution to the needs which were identified.

It was concluded that there exists no major structure or organization through which all educational groups or agencies in southern Illinois may collectively work. Efforts of individuals or groups are often isolated and may often be focused in opposite directions.

It is concluded that the major problems in the southern Illinois schools focus around the pupils. Motivation and pupil interest in learning continue to be of concern to educators at all levels.

It is concluded that instructional programs and guidance programs in southern Illinois schools are in need of improvement. Southern Illinois educators want better instructional programs and better guidance programs than are currently being offered.

It is concluded that regional educators are unaware of educational needs and alternatives in adult education. Oftentimes in rural areas it is difficult to find leaders outside of the school who are able or willing to provide necessary leadership to develop and carry through community needs.

Recommendations. It is recommended that funds be applied for from federal, state and/or private agencies to ameliorate the major needs identified in each of the 4 areas on the Needs Assessment Instrument. This may be done in many ways. Specifically the following educational agencies should develop a consortium to attend to the identified needs: 1) area public schools, 2) regional Illinois Office of Education personnel, 3) superintendents of educational service regions and 4) area colleges and universities. Other persons or agencies which may be available to help are consulting agencies, textbook companies, private foundations and local, state and federal governmental agencies. Various techniques the agencies may use to solve the problems would vary from situation to situation.

It is recommended that a needs awareness program be developed for regional educators concerning adult education programs. Rural areas are usually more inhabited with a higher percent of unemployed and poorly educated citizens than the more urban areas. Adult

education programs must begin to make a significant contribution to solutions concerning problems in rural areas.

It is recommended that college of education instructors give special consideration in their courses to explaining concepts related to the major needs identified in this study. The departments related to administration, curriculum, instruction and guidance should investigate ways to address solutions to the needs identified.

It is recommended that local school districts develop continuous research and development programs to solve problems related to the major areas of needs identified in this study.

It is recommended that local school districts plan continuous in-service programs which are designed to help their personnel find workable solutions to the needs identified.

It is recommended that research specifically related to increasing pupil motivation and interest be done throughout the southern Illinois schools. This research effort may be a joint effort of a number of different educational agencies.

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